

## Two-year grant supports geriatric education for APOM residents

The Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine residency program will receive a boost in geriatric training thanks to a two-year \$40,000 grant from The American Geriatrics Society (AGS)/John A. Hartford Foundation Project: Geriatrics-for-Specialists Initiative: Geriatrics Education for Specialty Residents Program (GSR). The grant assists in integrating geriatric training, education and scenarios into anesthesiology residency curriculum. The grant is a collaboration between APOM Associate Professors Dawn Dillman, M.D., and Chris Swide, M.D., and Endowed Professor and Director of Geriatrics at OHSU Elizabeth Eckstrom, M.D.



According to Dr. Dillman, the areas of emphasis will be addressed in a multi-format approach throughout the three years of the curriculum, taking advantage of existing educational opportunities as well as creating new opportunities. For example, a Grand Rounds session on geriatrics will be added to the department's schedule and second-year residents will participate in a simulation scenario involving a geriatric patient.



The importance of incorporating more geriatric training has become clearer over the years as more Americans are over the age of 65 than ever before. Last year APOM performed approximately 8,678 anesthetics on patients 65 years or older, an increase of more than 2 percent from 2003. Of those patients, approximately 4 percent were over the age of 80.



According to the AGS, in 1970 the average age of U.S. inpatients was 40.7 years and 20 percent of all inpatients were 65 years or older. In 2002, the average inpatient age had risen to 52.1 years and 38 percent of all inpatients were 65 or older.

Dr. Dillman highlighted the importance of integrated education. "The continued aging of America means we need to pay particular attention to how we care for the elderly," she said. "The way to have the largest impact on practice is to ensure the next generation of practitioners is educated about the special needs of the elderly in a way that permeates throughout the entire residency. Then it becomes engrained into the way we think about patients, not something we are pulling out of a specialized part of our training."

In addition to the enhanced knowledge and understanding of geriatric issues and patients, the hope is that this grant fosters a collaboration between APOM and the Geriatrics Division that continues. "The strong commitment of the leadership in both departments makes it likely that the collaboration will work well and continue into the future," Dr. Dillman said.

Dr. Eckstrom added: "I am delighted that our Geriatrics Program will be collaborating with Dr. Dillman and the Anesthesiology Residency Program to enhance competency in the care of older adults. As medicine advances and older adults are undergoing more surgical procedures, having specialized knowledge and skills in the care of geriatric patients will ensure the highest quality of care for our

patients. We are grateful to the John A. Hartford Foundation and the American Geriatrics Society for supporting this important initiative.”

OHSU is the first hospital in the Northwest to be awarded this grant, which was established to improve the amount and quality of geriatric education in residency programs. Programs were evaluated on innovation, feasibility, sustainability, specialty and geriatrics commitment and local and national impact. Funded programs are asked to serve as models that can be implemented by other training programs.

*In photos (top to bottom): Dawn Dillman, M.D., Elizabeth Eckstrom, M.D., and Chris Swide, M.D.*